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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities
Working Group on Contemporary Forms
of Slavery
Eighteenth session
17-28 May 1993
Item 6 (k) of the provisional agenda

DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEASURES AND STRATEGIES TO PREVENT AND ELIMINATE CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF SLAVERY: INDEMNIFICATION, REPARATION AND COMPENSATION OF VICTIMS OF SLAVERY, SLAVERY-LIKE PRACTICES AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF SLAVERY

Letter dated ... from the Special Rapporteur on the right to restitution, compensation and rehabilitation for victims of gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms addressed to the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery pursuant to Sub-Commission resolution 1992/2

At its seventeenth session the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery made two requests in connection with the work of the Special Rapporteur on the right to restitution, compensation and rehabilitation for victims of gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In the first request included in the general part of the recommendations adopted by the Working Group at its seventeenth session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/34, para. 124), the Special Rapporteur was asked to collaborate with the Working Group, to make recommendations especially in connection with contemporary forms of slavery and to take into account the need for moral compensation for victims of the slave trade and other early forms of slavery. The Special Rapporteur will take this request into account in the preparation of his final report which will be submitted to the forty-fifth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. It should be noted that the final report will include basic principles and guidelines relating to the subject matter of the Special Rapporteur's study.

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The second request, which was included in the part of the Working Group's recommendations that pertains to the prevention of traffic in persons and exploitation of the prostitution of others (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/34, para. 124), was addressed to the Secretary-General, he was asked to submit to the Special Rapporteur information received by the Working Group regarding the situation of women forced to engage in prostitution during wartime. This second request was endorsed by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in its resolution 1992/2 of 14 August 1992 (para. 18).

As regards this second request, the Special Rapporteur has received from the Secretary-General a large amount of documentation concerning the situation of women forced to engage in prostitution during wartime. In addition, much information was addressed directly to the Special Rapporteur. Taking into account the global nature of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and considering the voluminous amount of information received on the situation of women forced to engage in prostitution during wartime which would require in-depth study and analysis, the Special Rapporteur informs the Working Group that he can only embark upon such an in-depth study and analysis of this particular issue if he were explicitly requested to do so and after he has completed his general study and submitted his final report to the Sub-Commission.

The Special Rapporteur also informs the Working Group that, if this is the wish of the Working Group, he is ready to undertake a study on the situation of women forced to engage in prostitution during wartime on the basis of the documentation received by him and in the light of the basic principles and guidelines which will be included in his final report to the Sub-Commission. The results of such a study could be presented to the nineteenth session of the Working Group in 1994. Assuming that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur will expire with the submission of his final report to the forty-fifth session of the Sub-Commission, this additional task could be carried out by him in the capacity of an individual expert without entailing financial implications.

The Working Group may wish to give this matter all the necessary attention it deserves and decide upon such course of action as the Working Group deems appropriate. It is requested that this letter be circulated as a document of the Working Group.

(Signed): Theo van Boven

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